

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method for the determination of multimers of multimer-forming proteins by gel electrophoresis, comprising  
~~wherein~~ fractionating a sample containing von Willebrand factor or fibrinogen into  
multimer bands ~~is fractionated~~ by submarine electrophoresis using a continuous,  
homogeneous agarose gel free of lumps,

~~wherein~~ visualizing multimer bands ~~are visualized by immunostaining after a~~  
~~Western blot analysis using a specific antibody enzyme conjugate on a blotting~~  
~~membrane, or are visualized~~ by a dye in the gel,

and optionally, ~~wherein~~ quantifying ~~stained bands on the blotting membrane or~~  
~~the dyed multimer bands~~ the gel are quantified.

17. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the dye is a blue stain.

18. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the multimer-forming protein is fibrinogen.

19. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the multimer-forming protein is von Willebrand factor.
20. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 1.6% to 3% by weight.
21. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 1.8% to 2.4% by weight.
22. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 0.7% to 1.8% by weight.
23. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 0.8% to 1.2% by weight.
24. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the gel electrophoresis is carried out at temperatures between 6° C and 14° C.
25. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the gel electrophoresis is carried out at temperatures between 8° C and 12° C.
26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein Coomassie blue dye is employed for blue staining of the multimer bands in the gel.

28. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the agarose gel is attached to a backing sheet.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the multimer bands are quantified by densitometry.

31. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 17 ~~claim 30~~, wherein the multimer bands are quantified after visualization with the blue stain ~~blue staining of the gel~~.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the gel is preserved by lamination after the visualization staining.

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, ~~wherein the~~  
~~multimer bands are visualized by a dye in the gel and wherein the gel is fixed and dried~~  
before the visualization prior to the staining.